
THE
DEAF LOVER

[Price One Shilling.]



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THE
DEAF LOVER,
A
FARCE

IN TWO ACTS;

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL
COVENT GARDEN.

THE SECOND EDITION.

WRITTEN BY F. PILON.

L O N D O N :

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M DCC LXXX.

ER



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following little piece meeting with uncommon success, after having been withdrawn from the stage, it may be expected that the author will say something by way of apology for the scene, which in its former state was deemed exceptionable; it was almost a literal translation from the Poulet, a dramatic proverb, and pronounced by men of unquestionable judgement an excellent situation; but nothing is so difficult to decide on with certainty, as the effect any incident will have in representation. Much as was thought of the Poulet in the closet, it was much disliked on the stage, and the piece consequently withdrawn for alteration. Fortunately for the author, he has succeeded in his second attempt to please, and the farce is once more in possession of the stage.

P R O L O G U E.

Written by the AUTHOR, *and spoken by*
Mr. LEE LEWES.

STATESMEN and Poets, oft', one fortune find ;

This Court being discontent, our Bard resign'd;
That is to say, resign'd as Courtiers mean,
He was turn'd out, but would come in again.
On one good point he's bent, a reformation,
And bade me tell this grand Association, }
He now has made a total alteration.

Mistakingly, he built on Gallic ground,
But prov'd French wit was, like French faith,
unsound;

Hence wiser grown, he's cautious in his views,
And makes no foreign compacts for his Muse.
On foreign aid 'tis hazardous reliance,
But certain ruin's in a French alliance.

By Gar, Monsieur will say, you mistake quite,
Mon Pais, my country, be *toujours* right;
Il faut vous aller, you must go to France,
If you would learn to make *bon alliance*;
Par l'alliance Bourbon, we long trick you;
Par l'alliance Amerique, trick dem too;
Voila Monsieur d'Estaing, has he not play'd,
One pretty trick, in taking *de Grenade*?
Is he not grand, invincible Hero?
Afrah, replies Teague, ask General Prevost!

So much with shot he bother'd him, they say,
 He play'd an old French trick, and ran away,
 Now home to France he's gone with broken thigh,
 His leg being wounded, kays he came too nigh;
 And, by St. Patrick, he deserv'd his fate,
 Who wou'd not give the women a retreat;
 Had but the Irish brigade been there,
 They'd given their hearts before they'd hurt the
 fair.

But talk no more of Heroes—name me one,
 Like the brave tar, who met the Spanish Don }
 Without a sword, and gave him up his own.
 Oh! such a trick, with all your gasconade,
 No French Monsieur, or Spaniard, ever play'd.
 But, whilst for valour's crown great nations fight,
 And wild Ambition takes the name of Right;
 Ambiguous states, each different power to fleece,
 Equal suspend the scale of war and peace;
 Abjure all principle, but that they've lent,
 And know no interest, but cent. per cent;
 But, rous'd by wrongs, the Genius of this land,
 In self-collected might, more firm shall stand;
 Hibernia's cause, and Britain's, now made one, }
 We boast a fam'ly compact of our own;
 Defies the treach'rous compact of Bourbon.
 Whilst Justice, as a flaming Ægis, throws
 Confusion and dismay on England's foes;
 Her thunder to the world shall speak again,
 She reigns th' unshaken Sov'reign of the Main.

Dramatis Personæ.

Meadows,
Young Wrongward,
Old Wrongward,
Canteen,
Sternhold,
Groom,
2d Servant,
3d Servant,
1st } Gentleman,
2d }
Cook,
William,
John,
Sophia,
Betsey Blossom,
1st } Lady,
2d }

Mr. LEE LEWES.
Mr. ROBSON.
Mr. WILSON.
Mr. WHITFIELD.
Mr. BATES.
Mr. FEARON.
Mr. BRUNSDON.
Mr. CUSHING.
Mr. SMITH.
Mr. LEDGER.
Mr. PAINTER.
Mr. STEVENS.
Mr. THOMPSON.
Mrs. MORTON.
Mrs. WILSON.
Miss GREEN.
Miss STEWART.

THE
DEAF LOVER.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Room at an Inn. Meadows discovered in a Riding-dress with Canteen.

MEADOWS.

WAS there no possibility of bribing one of the servants?

CANTEEN.

None in the world, Sir, which indeed surprized me, for tho' I must confess they have all good places, I have known folks with better, and in a greater man's service, who wou'd not let a bribe slip thro' their fingers for want of the trouble of clinching the fist upon it.

B

ME A-

MEADOWS.

What shall I do, Canteen? you are an old campaigner, and should be ripe with stratagem in desperate cases!

CANTEEN.

I have got a scheme to serve you, if you'll undertake it.

MEADOWS.

Can you doubt me?

CANTEEN.

Then be attentive: Old Wrongward's house, on the approaching wedding, is throng'd as a fair with company; dress yourself in the style of an elderly gentleman travelling the country; pretend to misapprehend ev'ry body; in short assume the character of a deaf man, and, thus disguised, put up at his house, as if you took it for an inn.

MEADOWS.

Pho! Pho! I shall be taken before a Magistrate.

CANTEEN.

Not you, indeed, Sir; at all these public weddings there are a great number of strangers, invited by the chief guests; you'll pass as a friend to some of the company—But grant you are taken for the character you assume, an old, deaf, blundering blockhead; your mistakes will create

so

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so much entertainment, that nobody will think of turning you out of doors till you have full opportunity of discovering yourself to your mistress.

MEADOWS.

And do you think she'll listen to me ?

CANTEEN.

I'm sure of it, Sir ; I'd stake my life to a cartouch box, that your letters from camp have been intercepted, and some damn'd story trump'd up by that old villain her guardian, to make her marry his own son.

MEADOWS.

It must be so, my Sophia otherwise could never have forgot me.

CANTEEN.

It must be so ! Lord, Sir, if you were not so much in love, it would appear to you as plain as a pike-staff ; but when once love gets into a man's head, poor reason is brought before a court-martial of the passions, and cashiered without a hearing.

MEADOWS.

But it will be necessary to apprise Sophia of this, if I can by any means convey a letter to her.

CANTEEN.

A light breaks in upon me ; I met a little flower girl standing at the inn-door, as fresh, and as
B 2 blooming

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blooming as the sweetest rose in her basket—
Don't you imagine a letter may be conveyed by
her into the garrison?

MEADOWS.

Can we trust her?

CANTEEN.

She's as sure as a rifle barrel, Sir;—You know
what a smooth tongue and a smart figure will do
with a girl in the country; I have persuaded her,
that I am over head and ears in love with her—
and have sworn, by the god of love, and the god
of battles, that I'll make her Mrs. Canteen, if
she pleases, before to-morrow morning.

MEADOWS.

Where is she?

CANTEEN.

Selling nosegays to passengers, as they go in
and out of their carriages; but I'll bring her to
you, Sir, in the drawing of a trigger, in the mean
time write your letter;—There's pen, ink, and
paper on the table.

[Exit Canteen.]

MEADOWS.

[Writing.] My all depends on her receiving
this letter—otherwise, the surprize of so unex-
pectedly meeting me, might occasion a discovery
—[Seeing Canteen and Betsy Blossom.] Oh! here
come Mars and Venus already.

Enter

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Enter Canteen and Betsy Blossom.

B E T S Y.

Nosegays, your Honour?

M E A D O W S.

Come hither, my pretty dear, and let me see them.

[Looks in the basket.]

B E T S Y.

O Sir, don't tumble over my basket! I can't let you pick and chuse at a common price.

C A N T E E N.

[Aside to her.] Let him take which he pleases, he's as generous as a Prince, huffey.

B E T S Y.

Is he? by Gosh then he shall have the myrtle and the jessamine, and the two moss roses I was taking up to the Squire's, where the great wedding is to be.

M E A D O W S.

What's that you say? Are you going to the house, where the great wedding is to be?

B E T S Y.

Yes, and I shall sell all my nosegays there, and am promised a ribban for a bride-favor, by John the Butler.

C A N T E E N.

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C A N T E E N.

O ho! John the Butler! I find I'm not sole proprietor of my little nosegay merchant.

M E A D O W S.

[*Taking her by the band.*] Now, my sweet dear, blooming little Flora, if you will grant me one favour, I will give you a guinea.

B E T S Y.

Who I, Sir! I'd have you to know, Sir, that I scorn your guineas — I am no such parson — though I'm poor, I'm honest, that let me tell you — and I'd rather sell nosegays with my vartue, than ride in a coach and fix without it.

C A N T E E N.

Zounds! what an explosion was there, from a carbine like a pocket pistol — why who's going to meddle with your vartue? I tell you, you may keep the guinea and your vartue together.

B E T S Y.

May I?

C A N T E E N.

Yes; but I find, Betsey, I'm greatly deceiv'd in your temper. I thought you were as meek as a violet, but I find you are as sharp as a sweet briar.

M E A D O W S.

I only want you, my dear, to take this letter for me, and deliver it into the young Lady's hand

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hand who is to be married to-morrow; and to take care that nobody sees you.

B E T S Y.

As sure as a gun I know who you are.

M E A D O W S.

Ay, prithee who am I?

B E T S Y.

You are her old sweetheart, and she has turned false-hearted.

C A N T E E N.

Oons what a witch it is! I'll go and prepare your dress, Sir. *[Exit Canteen.]*

B E T S Y.

It's the talk of the whole village how Miss Sophia had forsaken a malicious officer that was in love with her.

M E A D O W S.

Will you take this letter for me?

B E T S Y.

That I will with all my heart,—and between ourselves tho' I am a poor girl, give her her own into the bargain.

M E A D O W S.

My dear, you must not say a word to her; only deliver the letter.

B E T S Y.

What then you wou'd not have me scold her?

M E A D O W S.

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MEADOWS.

By no means,—that wou'd ruin me for ever
in her esteem; but what is your name, my love?

BETSY.

Betsy Blossom, an't please you. (*Curtfying.*)

MEADOWS.

Well, my dear Betsy, go off immediately, and
remember that the whole happiness of my life
depends on your care and secrecy.

S O N G.

BETSY.

Believe me, Sir, you'll find me true,
As any girl you ever knew,
I know no art,
To hide my heart,
And since with flow'rs first I stood
To young or old
I never fold
Two faces under a hood.

Tis true I dress in simple gown
And never saw the flaunting town
Where Ladies shine
In silks so fine
Still I think myself as good
As toasted belle
Whilst I ne'er sell
Two faces under a hood.

[*Exeunt Meadows and Betsy Blossom.*]

S C E N E II.

Old Wrongward *and* Sternhold *discover'd.*
Sternhold *reading the Papers to him,* Old
Wrongward *in his Gouty Chair, wrapt up in*
Flannels.

OLD WRONGWARD.

You are a terrible reader, Sternhold: can't you speak your words shorter?—you sound every syllable, as if you had a speaking-trumpet at your mouth.

STERNHOLD.

I can't help it, your honor; it is a way I have got.

OLD WRONGWARD.

It's like the grind of an ill-ton'd barrel-organ in my ears—but go on, for you were born a parish clerk, and will chaunt every thing in psalm-tune to the end of the chapter.

STERNHOLD. (*reading*)

Rome, April 1st. Yesterday morning between twelve and one, his Holiness the Pope was safely deliver'd of twins—the mother and children are well, and likely to live.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Why is the fellow mad? the Pope deliver'd of twins! zounds! you may as well tell me of

C

St.

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St. Paul's dancing the hayes, or the Monument turning prize-fighter.

STERNHOLD.

Shall I go on?

OLD WRONGWOOD.

Read over that last article again, for I'm sure you have made a blunder.

STERNHOLD (*reads*).

Rome, April 1st. Yesterday morning between twelve and one, his Holiness the Pope was safely delivered of twins—the mother and children are well, and likely to live.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Truly this is a most extraordinary event if it be a fact, and must cause strange confusion among the Cardinals; but upon second thoughts it's not altogether past belief, for there's a well-known story of a female Pope, who was discovered by her pregnancy, Pope Joan I think she was called—but give me the paper, for damn me if I can believe it yet—(*takes the paper and reads*) “Mr. Printer, if you think the following cros read-“ ings”—cros readings! ha! ha! ha!—confound those cros readings—as if things were not cros enough of themselves.

Enter Sophia and Betsey Blossom.

SOPHIA. (*aside to Betsey.*)

And he seem'd deeply concern'd?

BETSEY.

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B E T S Y.

Oh, deeply concern'd, and his eyes, poor soul,
as red as blood with crying.

O L D W R O N G W A R D.

Is not that Sople I see? eh! how's this?
where's my son George! has the rascal the im-
pudence to stir an inch from your apron-string?

S O P H I A.

Sir, he cannot with propriety leave the com-
pany; more especially, as infirmities prevent
your entertaining them.

O L D W R O N G W A R D.

Infirmities! why what infirmities have I got,
except a little touch of the gout, now and then?
If I could walk, and had the use of my right
hand, and could see without spectacles, I'd be as
hale a man as any in the county. (*Seeing Betsy
Blossom*) But who is that little blooming rogue
with you?

S O P H I A.

A flower-girl, Sir; she has brought me some
jessamine and moss roses.

O L D W R O N G W A R D.

Ay? tell her to come this way, and let me
look at her moss roses.

S O P H I A. (*aside to Betsy.*)

Go shew him your nosegays, Betsy, and keep
him in chat, whilst I run and write an answer.

BETSY.

But Lord, Ma'am, he bears such a terrible character, I'm afraid to go nigh him.

SOPHIA.

Pho! pho! never fear him; he has not been out of that chair, except at bed times, these three months, but is roll'd up and down the house like a great baby; go to him, I say, and I'll return immediately.

[Exit Sophia.]

OLD WRONGWARD.

You may go about your business, Sternhold, I'm tired of your damn'd drone—It's worse than an old cloath's man in London.

STERNHOLD.

Lord! Lord! What will this world come to!

[Exit Sternhold]

BETSY. (*Afide.*)

By Gofs, as he can't budge, I'll have a little fun with him.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Come hither, my pretty maid, and let me look at your moss roses.

BETSY. (*Runs up to him.*)

Aye to be sure, Sir, there are not so fine ones in all the country.

OLD

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OLD WRONGWARD. (*Taking up the flowers.*)

Upon my word they are fine ones — But is Sophy gone? Is there nobody sees us?

BETSY.

Not a soul, we are both together, all alone by ourselves.

OLD WRONGWARD.

But are you sure that there's nobody listening?

BETSY.

Oh! very fartin, Sir,

OLD WRONGWARD.

Then give me a kifs, you little smiling rogue.

BETSY.

Oh dear Sir, woud'n't you be ashamed to kifs such a poor girl as I?

OLD WRONGWARD.

Ashamed! not I, by the Lord Harry; come hither I say.

BETSY. (*Aside.*)

Now to plague him—Why you must know, Sir, that I'm afraid some of the family will see us; but if you'll fetch a walk with me any where.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Fetch a walk with her! I could as soon fetch the Tower upon my back,

BETSY.

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BETSY.

But now I look at your legs, I suppose you can't walk.—O Lud! They're like mill posts.

OLD WRONGWARD.

No, no, not quite so bad, they're a little swelled to be sure, but there's a great deal of flannel about them.

BETSY.

Shall I help you, Sir? (*takes him by the hand and pulls him.*)

OLD WRONGWARD (*Roars out.*)
Zounds! you've broke my arm, you jade.

Sophia at the back of the Stage.

SOPHIA.

Betsy!

BETSY.

I'm coming, Ma'am. (*going.*)

OLD WRONGWARD.

Then you won't come and kifs me, huffley?

BETSY.

I think it is you that won't kifs me, Sir.—
Lord! Sir, if you want a kifs, why don't you come and take it?

OLD WRONGWARD.

O you wicked baggage, you know that I can't stir—I'd give half my estate for a pair of legs to be revenged of you.

BETSY

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B E T S Y.

Then you won't fetch a walk, Sir, nor give me a kiss—very well!—I'll not be denied the next man I ask—good by, Sir—I must go, ha! ha! ha!

S O N G.

What! refuse me a kiss?
I shall die sure with grief,
To be robb'd of such bliss,
What can bring me relief?
One, one kiss, cruel man,
What! deny me again?
Then I'll go where the willow so green
grows,
And trembling droops o'er the brook,
There, to each gentle zephyr that by blows,
My sighs shall tell I'm forsook.
But why should I, if man disdain
To heal this hapless bosom's pain,
Compleat the tyrant's triumph quite
And foolish maiden die for spite?

No, no,

I'll go,

And since a false one you do prove,
I'll die of any thing but love.

[Exit Betsy. Enter Young Wrongward.]

Y O U N G W R O N G W A R D.

What, Sir, is not Sophia here?

OLD WRONGWARD.

She was here this moment.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

What's the matter with you, Sir? I hope you're not ill?

OLD WRONGWARD.

No, but I was bargaining for some moss roses, and they have prickt my fingers so confoundedly.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

I have very bad news to tell you, Sir; Meadows has been seen about the house.

OLD WRONGWARD.

The Devil he has! Then, boy, we are undone. If she sees him, our intercepting his letters, and the story of his marriage with another will all be discovered.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

She has seen no stranger to-day?

OLD WRONGWARD.

Not a soul to my knowledge, except a poor little innocent flower girl.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

It's no matter; that woman, I'm persuaded, has brought her a letter.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Ecod, like enough.

YOUNG

THE DEAF LOVER. 25

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

Then Sir, if you will sit with the company, I'll go in pursuit of her, and if in the power of gold, I'll get ev'ry thing out of her.

[Exit Young Wrongward,

OLD WRONGWARD.

Ay, with all my heart,—here, William.

Enter William.

WILLIAM.

Did you call, Sir!

OLD WRONGWARD.

Roll me into the company [William goes behind the chair and rolls it]. Softly you rascal, if legs could be purchased, what wou'dn't I give for a new pair?

[Exit William, rolling off Old Wrongward.

SCENE III.

Changes to the outside of Old Wrongward's house.

Enter John.

JOHN.

What a couple of damn'd rogues my master and I are, to stop all these here letters—it would

D

go

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go greatly against my conscience, only for what I get by it—Well, my master cheats his ward, and I cheat my master, for he has never seen this picture (*pulls out a miniature*) nor the letter that came with it yet—if these ar'n't mock diamonds round it, it will bring a pretty penny—let me see now.

Enter Betsey Blossom.

B E T S Y.

Good day, Mr. John.

J O H N.

Ah! my pretty Betsey—come hither, my little dear.

B E T S Y.

What's that you are looking at so close, Mr. John?

J O H N.

Only a picture, my love, are you a good judge of painting Betsey?

B E T S Y.

Painting! Lord, Sir, you must ask some fine London Lady that question; we poor folks in the country know nothing of the matter.

J O H N.

How do you like that, Betsey? [*shews her the miniature.*]

B E T S Y.

It has a vast fine frame round it.

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J O H N.

Yes, yes, you are a great judge of painting,
I see clearly.

B E T S Y.

And looks as natural as you that are speaking
to me.

J O H N.

Eh! why, zounds! she takes it for my pic-
ture.

B E T S Y.

What fine eyes!

J O H N.

Fine eyes! oh! yes, she takes it for me.

B E T S Y.

And two cheeks like cherries—then such pret-
ty hair—so curl'd, so frized and so flower'd, it
looks like a white thorn in full blossom.

J O H N.

You must know, my dear, I wore my hair so
when that was drawn for me.

B E T S Y.

Is this your picture, Mr. John?

J O H N.

I thought you knew that already.

B E T S Y.

I vow, I took it for a gentleman's.

D 2

J O H N

J O H N.

What, then, you don't think it like me?

B E T S Y.

Like you? no more like you than a carnation is like a butcher's broom.

J O H N.

Butcher's broom! what a Fleet-market comparison!---You think then I am alter'd since it was drawn for me?

B E T S Y.

Oh! quite chang'd, you are as brown as a chesnut to what you were; and your eyes, that were once so blue, are now as grey as the very willows.

J O H N.

I am sitting for a striking likeness, I find.

B E T S Y.

Then your forehead's grown square---your chin sharp --- your nose flat --- your teeth --- no, they're not grown at all---for I cant see above one or two left in your head.

J O H N.

Zounds! have done, you unmerciful baggage: give me my picture. I may be alter'd a little, but it is impossible I can be so damnably metamorphos'd as you describe.

B E T S Y.

What, after making a bargain?

Enter

Enter Young Wrongward.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

So, 'so, Mr. John, what bargain is this you have been striking?

JOHN.

Bargain! Sir—I was only agreeing about some tulips.

BETSY.

That was all, your honour—John only wanted some tulips of me.

JOHN. (*Aside to Betsy.*)

Not a word of the picture.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

But, Sir, can't the gardener supply you?

JOHN.

Sir, he says, I want too many, and that he won't spoil his beds to please me or any man in England.

BETSY.

Now, Sir, I can give him plenty, and never mind spoiling a bed when it is made worth my while.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

I believe you, young damsel—Harkee, John, (*aside to John.*)—I suppose this girl has been employed

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ployed by Meadows to convey a letter to Sophia.
Get you gone, and I'll sound her.

JOHN.

You had better leave her to me, Sir.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

No, no, she's too artful for you.

JOHN.

Ay, and for you too, I'll be sworn—I don't like to leave her alone with him.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

Not gone yet, Sir?

JOHN.

Oh! yes, I'm gone—(*aside*)—Very far gone, I find, in love, for now am I as jealous as the Devil of him—Oh! my poor picture, I shall never see it's face again. (*Exit John.*)

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

Can you keep a secret, my dear?

BETSY.

I don't know, Sir; I never was tried.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

Come, come, I know you have; and if you'll divulge it to me, I'll give you more than you got from Captain Meadows.

BETSY.

Captain Meadows! who is he, Sir? I don't know him—(*aside*)—He's only pumping me now, but he shall get nothing by it.

YOUNG

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YOUNG WRONGWARD.

What, then, you have neither brought nor received a letter here to-day?

BETSY.

Lord! Sir, who'd trust the likes of me with a letter?

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

Let me see now, in which pocket have you got it? (*attempts to search her.*)

BETSY.

Keep your hands to yourself, I have nothing smuggled about me—you shan't rummage me like a custom-house officer.

YOUNG WRONGWARD (*pulls out a purse.*)

Look at this, hussy—I have both power and inclination to reward you.

BETSY.

I'm sure, Sir, there's nothing I wouldn't do to serve you.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

Then you'll give me the letter?

BETSY.

Letter! Lord! Sir, what letter?

YOUNG

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YOUNG WRONGWARD.

Come, I insist upon your taking this [*gives her money*]. And now.

BETSY,

And now, your honour, I'll go home to my father's, and bring you the letter immediately.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

Your father's! how came it there?

BETSY.

It came by the post, yesterday, from Devonshire.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

Devonshire! what the Devil is Devonshire to me?

BETSY.

I thought you wanted to know something about my brother the gardener, who wrote us a main long letter yesterday, and, what surprized us all, he's going to be married.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

A most interesting piece of information I must confess. She's a downright idiot.—How ridiculous do my suspicions make me!

[*Exit young Wrongward.*]

BETSY.

By Gofs, I have trickt him nicely. So now to my dear Mr. Canteen. [*Canteen enters.*]

CANTEEN.

C A N T E E N.

Ah! Betsey, I've been watching you, and I fear'd you'd have turn'd traitor and betray'd us.

B E T S Y.

No, Mr. Canteen, I never wou'd do that—I wou'd not betray you, no, not for five pound.

C A N T E E N.

What not for five pound? O matchless fidelity!—But come, have you got an answer?

B E T S Y.

Yes, I have that and John's picture both together.

C A N T E E N.

John's picture? well, this is the first time I ever knew a man vain of his ugliness! If I had such an old lion's head riveted upon my shoulders, I'd quarrel with a basin of spring water, for reflecting my own countenance on me.

B E T S Y.

Ay—but his picture is very handsome—it's no more like him than box is like southernwood.

C A N T E E N.

No, then he has set for his picture by proxy, or perhaps, like many others coxcombs, purchas'd it, as we sometimes do shoes, ready made. But come, let us look at it.

E

B E T S Y.

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B E T S Y.

Here it is.

[shews the miniature.]

C A N T E E N.

Zounds! this is my master's picture.

B E T S Y.

What, captain Meadows's?

C A N T E E N.

His own likeness—and the very miniature I saw him inclose about six weeks ago to Miss Sophia.

B E T S Y.

As sure as can be, he stole it.

C A N T E E N.

I don't know how he came by it: but you're certain he gave it you?

B E T S Y.

Quite fartin.

C A N T E E N.

Then come along, my Betsey; if you behave well now, I'll make great advantages of this discovery: you shall introduce me to John as your brother, and I'll terrify him with a confession before I have done with him.

[Exeunt Betsey and Canteen.]

SCENE

SCENE changes to a View before the Stables.

*Enter Meadows disguis'd as an old Gentleman,
with the Groom.*

MEADOWS.

I hope your hay is good, friend?

GROOM.

It's no matter how my hay is. I tell you, you
are mistaken in the house; this is no inn.

MEADOWS.

Why if you think so, give him a feed of oats;
but take care to rub him down well.

GROOM.

Rub down the Devil! I tell you, my master
keeps no inn.

MEADOWS.

Throw a few beans among the oats, if you
have any.

GROOM.

Throw a few beans among the oats! Zounds!
who promis'd to give you any oats?

MEADOWS.

That's a good lad, I know you'll take care of
him.

GROOM.

He's as deaf as a door nail.—He does n't un-
derstand a word I say.

E 2

MEADOWS.

36 THE DEAF LOVER.

M E A D O W S.

Did you speak to me, young man?

G R O O M.

I have been bawling to you this hour, to tell you this is no inn: yonder is the George, or the Swan, or the King's Arms, where you'll get your horse and yourself taken care of.

[Bawling in his ear.]

M E A D O W S.

Well, well, I'll take your word for the goodness of your corn; you had no occasion to be so loud in praise of it.

G R O O M.

What the Devil shall I do with him? He drove his horse into the stable, before I knew where I was, and if I turn him adrift, I shall be prosecuted by act of parliament.

M E A D O W S.

My good lad, do you hear me?

G R O O M.

I wish I could make you hear me as plain.

M E A D O W S.

I like your countenance.

G R O O M.

That's more than I do your's.

M E A D O W S.

MEADOWS.

There's something in it tells me, you will do the beast justice, therefore here's a shilling for you—and if I find I have not been mistaken in the opinion I have formed of you, I shall remember you when I go away also.

GROOM.

This is the first word of sense I have got out of him—well, as his horse is in the stable, let him stay there; my master, I'm sure, will never miss his one night's keep; but then the best joke will be when he gets into the house—ha! ha! ha! I shall kill myself with laughing at the thoughts of it.

MEADOWS.

Ha! ha! ha! Very good, very good indeed.

GROOM.

What the Devil does he laugh at?

MEADOWS.

I find you are a fellow of a good deal of humour.

GROOM.

Humour! What does he mean?

MEADOWS.

You tell a devilish good story, but I can't stay to hear the end of it, for I'm greatly fatigued and very weary—now remember you rub him
down

down well, and don't forget the beans amongst the oats.

(Exit Meadows.

GROOM.

I tell a dev'lish good story, and have a great deal of humour! If 'tis so, you are the first that ever discovered my talents—Well! I have got a shilling from you, so mum's the word, you're deaf—I am dumb, old gentleman. *(Exit Groom.*

END OF FIRST ACT.

THE DEAF LOVER. 39

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

A Hall in Old Wrongward's House; several Servants running across the Stage with Supper.

1st SERVANT.

He's swearing like a dragon about the iced cream.

2d SERVANT.

I wish he was to feed upon nothing else till his temper became as cool as his stomach.

Enter Cook.

COOK.

A man had better stand cook in Belzebub's kitchen. Here have I been broiling myself, like a beef-steak, for these two hours, and am thanked in a volley of oaths for it afterwards.

Enter third Servant.

3d SERVANT.

There's not a drop of Madeira in the room; and the Butler is to be turn'd-off to-morrow.

Enter Meadows, draws a Chair, and sits.

MEADOWS.

40 THE DEAF LOVER.

MEADOWS.

Aye, I like this.—It's an old saying, good business makes a good house.

SERVANT.

This is some gentleman invited to supper; we had better tell him it's on the table.

2d SERVANT [*going up to Meadows.*]

Certainly!—It's on the table, Sir.

MEADOWS.

No, I'll not pull off my boots till I go to bed.

2d SERVANT.

Pull off his boots! who said any thing about his boots? Tho', now I look at them, damn me if ever I saw a dirtier pair in the course of my life.

MEADOWS.

What have you got for supper?

WILLIAM.

Every thing the season can afford, is on the table, Sir?

MEADOWS.

Why, you blockhead, woodcocks are not in season.

WILLIAM.

I said nothing about woodcocks—but, Sir, there's a delightful carp stewed in claret—a fine

THE DEAF LOVER. 41

jack roasted with a pudding in his belly—some choice pheasants—and such cherry tarts—apple pies, jellies, iced creams, and sweetmeats, that my teeth water at the bare thoughts of them.

M E A D O W S.

Very well, that will do, my friend ; but take care you get me some good mushroom sauce to it.

2d SERVANT.

Mushroom sauce ! to what, Sir ?

M E A D O W S.

A broil'd fowl will do well enough.

W I L L I A M.

A broil'd fowl ! I didn't mention a word of broil'd fowl—did I, Bob ?

2d SERVANT.

Not a syllable.

W I L L I A M.

Zounds ! he's deaf.

2d SERVANT.

Or mad ; speak louder to him—try if you can make him hear you.

W I L L I A M. (*Bawling in his ear.*)

Supper is on the table, Sir ; and if you are invited to the house by my master, it will be as much as our places are worth, if we do not bring you up to him immediately.

F

M E A D O W S.

THE DEAF LOVER.

MEADOWS.

Well, do the best you can for me.

WILLIAM.

Ah! it's all in vain to talk to him; let us see if we can make him understand by signs. (*makes signs they will shew him the way.*)

MEADOWS.

Bless you, my lad, I am not particular.

(*Exit Meadows and Servants.*)

SCENE changes to an elegant apartment—Old Wrongward, Young Wrongward, and a large party at supper.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Fill me a bumper of Madeira—though the enemy has got possession of the greater part of my outworks, I'll take care to keep him from the citadel, whilst there's a flask in my cellar to support me. (*drinks.*)

Enter Meadows and John.

WILLIAM.

This way, Sir.

MEADOWS.

Aye! I see all your rooms are full, but it's no matter, I'm fond of company.

OLD

THE DEAF LOVER. 43

OLD WRONGWARD (*Aside to Young Wrongward.*)

Here's a stranger ! do you know him, George

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

I suppose he's a friend to some of the company

OLD WRONGWARD.

Certainly—go to him, boy, and ask him if he has supp'd.

YOUNG WRONGWARD. (*comes to Meadows*

Sir, I esteem myself particularly honour'd in the favour of this visit—here, William, lay a side table for this gentleman—As we are just done supper, I beg, Sir, you'll not consider yourself a stranger. (*retires to his seat*

MEADOWS.

Very dear, indeed, Sir ; good Virginia is hard to be come at, but I always carry a box of Oroonoko in my pocket (*pulls out a box.*)

[*A table is laid for Meadows; he sits*

OLD WRONGWARD. (*to Meadows.*)

Warm travelling, Sir.

MEADOWS.

There was none stirring, when I was in town, Sir.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Stirring ! no nor moving for it, Sir, in that part of the world—though the gout confines me

4 THE DEAF LOVER.

o this chair, I feel myself as hot as if I was
basking on the coast of Guinea.

Enter Sophia.

SOPHIA. (*aside.*)

Yonder he sits; if he should be discovered, all
my hopes of happiness are gone for ever.

MEADOWS. (*aside.*)

I feel myself in such agitation at the sight of
my Sophia, that I fear it will mar my counter-
feiting.

Sophia sits next to Young Wrongward; they talk.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Come, old gentleman, I'll give you a toast,
that I'm sure you'll have no objection to—here's
to the young couple. (*All the company drink.*)

MEADOWS.

With all my heart; I'm sure he has not a
better subject in his dominions.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Ay, and what's better, he's going the right
road to raise more good subjects.

MEADOWS.

The King! (*drinks.*)

OLD WRONGWARD.

The King! why I drank my son and daughter
that is to be's health.

THE DEAF LOVER. 45

M E A D O W S.

Ah, Sir ! there's no answering for what people will say.

O L D W R O N G W A R D.

No answering for what people will say! damn me if ever I knew any thing so impudent in the whole course of my life before.

Y O U N G W R O N G W A R D.

Pray does any of the company know him?

1st L A D Y.

I don't, for my part.

1st G E N T L E M A N.

Nor I.

2d L A D Y.

Nor I.

2d G E N T L E M A N.

Nor I, nor any of us.

A L L.

No, not one of us.

S O P H I A.

How I tremble for him, now.

O L D W R O N G W A R D.

Here, William, who shew'd this old fellow here?

W I L.

46 THE DEAF LOVER.

WILLIAM.

I did, Sir; I took him to be one of the company.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Why, nobody here knows him.

MEADOWS. (*to Old Wrongward.*)

Sir, I have the pleasure of drinking your health.

OLD WRONGWARD. (*to Young Wrongward.*)

Did you ever know any thing like this, George?

MEADOWS. (*to William.*)

Do you hear, my lad? Send up the boot-catcher to me.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Send up the boot-catcher to him, we'll send up the thief-catcher to him—this fellow is come to rob the house.

MEADOWS.

This wine is dev'lish good; but I have a poor head, and am very sleepy.—*Bon repos*, good folks; I must leave you. (*gets up.*)

OLD WRONGWARD.

Stop him, George.

[*Young Wrongward and Company stop him.*]

MEADOWS.

THE DEAF LOVER. 47

MEADOWS.

Why, Gentlemen, all this pressing: it is to no purpose; I am determined to go to bed; and as a proof of it, there's half a crown for my share of the bill, as I can't stay till its called—will nobody give me a light?

OLD WRONGWARD (*to William.*)

Why, you rascal, can you give no rational account of this man?

WILLIAM.

All I can tell you is, he has set the whole family in an uproar—the groom says, he's deaf—the butler says, he's mad; but all agree in pronouncing him the most impudent, troublesome, dirty old fellow, ever came into a house—do but look at his boots, Sir.

SOPHIA (*aside.*)

Love has inspired me with a thought for his deliverance. (*comes forward.*) Bless me! I know this Gentleman's face perfectly well—it is the celebrated Doctor Humdrum; I saw him several times at Bath, tho' I never spoke to him: he's the first physician in England; but has been troubled with a most obstinate deafness for several years; and, what is most extraordinary, does every thing in his power to conceal it.

OLD

48 THE DEAF LOVER.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Deaf! why does he come here to plague us with his deafness?

SOPHIA.

I thought, Sir, you had more humanity than not to feel for such a misfortune.

OLD WRONGWARD.

But are you sure he's deaf?

SOPHIA.

Does not hear a word you say to him.

MEADOWS.

You'll let me go to bed then? Upon my soul, it gives me pain to part from such good company; but I'm quite weary,

OLD WRONGWOOD.

Ay, poor Gentleman, I pity him, he shall have a bed—he has taken the house for an inn, I suppose; a very good joke, faith—ha! ha! ha!

MEADOWS.

Ha! ha! ha! a dev'lish good song, a dev'lish good song indeed; but I can't stay to *encore* it. *Bon repos, bon repos!*

[Exit Meadows, lighted.

OLD

THE DEAF LOVER. 49

OLD WRONGWARD.

George, do you go and see the Gentleman is taken great care of.

[Fiddles behind. Exit Young Wrongward.]

OLD WRONGWARD.

Ha! here come the fiddles—come girls, foot it away, I'll fit up with you an hour extraordinary, and if this confounded gout would give my joints a holiday, I'd have a reel with the youngest of you.

A Dance. [Exeunt, rolling off Old Wrongward.]

S C E N E III.

Enter Sophia, Canteen, and Betsy Blossom.

S O P H I A.

So, Captain Meadows's servant is your brother, Betsy.

B E T S Y.

Oh, that was only—he! he! *[with affected confusion.]*

C A N T E E N.

Yes, Ma'am, as Betsy wou'd say, that was only to deceive John, your Guardian's privy counsellor.

S O P H I A.

I understand you, you are her sweetheart.

G

B E T S Y.

50 THE DEAF LOVER.

B E T S Y.

Oh! dear, your ladyship—you do so shame one.

S O P H I A.

But how have you proceeded since this discovery?

B E T S Y.

Vassly clever, I warrant him; he has frightened the butler out of his wits.

C A N T E E N.

I threatened him with a prosecution for stopping the picture, unless he turned King's evidence and informed against his master—my menaces had the desired effect, and he is devoted to our service.

S O P H I A.

Very well, don't be out of the way for a moment; I don't know how soon we may want you and your evidence—but, as a reward for your and Betsy's services, whenever you have her consent, I will give her a portion. [*Exit.*

B E T S Y.

I thank your ladyship, I'm sure I do.

C A N T E E N.

Now is my freedom gone.

B E T S Y.

What, you won't marry me?

C A N T E E N.

THE DEAF LOVER. 51

C A N T E E N.

Else how shou'd I lose my freedom?

B E T S Y.

I dont know what you mean, Mr. Canteen, by losing your freedom; but, if I thought you lost any thing when you married me, I wou'dn't have you for all my love to you.

C A N T E E N.

Pho! pho! you little fool, by giving up my freedom, I mean, I give up my heart into your possession for life.

B E T S Y.

Do you? Then, by goh! you shall have my heart for life instead of it. [Exeunt.

S C E N E changes to a Bed-chamber. Enter Meadows followed by a Chambermaid with lights,

M A I D.

This is my young Lady's apartment; and you must not stay here.

M E A D O W S.

My good girl, you needn't give yourself the trouble, I never have my bed warmed.

M A I D.

I didn't come to warm your bed—I want you to get out of the room.

MEADOWS.

No, no, it's a bad custom; good night to you.

MAID.

Odds my life but he'd provoke a faint, (*very loud.*) I tell you again and again that this is my young Lady's room, and you must quit it.

MEADOWS.

A sack posset! I'll not taste it. Come let me lock my door, for I must be stirring early.

[She gets between him and the door.]

MAID.

The Devil a door do you lock here to-night,

MEADOWS.

Ah! you wanton young baggage, I understand you; but all those days are over with me.

MAID.

Oh, Lord! what has the old nasty fellow got into his head now?

MEADOWS.

But come, we'll have one smack, and then *bon soir.*

MAID.

Help, help, murder!

[Offers to kiss her.]

Enter

Enter Servants.

1st SERVANT.

What's the matter, Sally?

MAID.

This old villain was going to ruin me.

2d SERVANT.

I wish he was out of the house; I wonder my master gave him a bed.

MEADOWS.

You'll take care to call me early.

2d SERVANT.

Damn me! if I call you.

3d SERVANT.

It's a shame for a man at your years to behave so.

MAID.

Ay, an old man like you, with one foot in the grave.

MEADOWS.

You are mistaken, my dear, I can get up as well as any young fellow in England.—I am a mighty good riser, I must mount early, therefore call me by five.

2d SERVANT.

We may as well talk to a stone wall.

MAID.

54. THE DEAF LOVER.

M A I D.

I shall lose my place for this.

M E A D O W S.

You needn't wait for the light.

[Sits down as if to undress.]

2d S E R V A N T.

Wait for the light! Damn me! if I had my will, but I'd darken your lights for you, and leave you to grope your way out of the house.

M E A D O W S.

Why, I believe, that's the safest way, so bring me an extinguisher; you're a good natur'd lad, and I'll remember you for this.

W I L L I A M.

If I cou'd write, I'd make him understand me at once.—Can you write, Joe?

2d S E R V A N T.

I can chalk main well, but nobody can understand it except myself.

W I L L I A M.

Why you, Bob, went to school, I know.

3d S E R V A N T.

Ay, but it's so long ago, I forgot all my larning: I'll make my mark, if you please.

M A I D.

MAID.

And it's my misfortune to neither read nor write

WILLIAM.

'Sdeath and fire, he's undressing! we must do something immediately.

[Meadows *lays down a case of large pistols.*

2d SERVANT.

What swinging pistols he has!

MEADOWS.

Lay you there, my good friends—I hope I shan't have the same need for you here as at the last inn where I lay.

2d SERVANT.

Do you hear that?

MEADOWS.

I am sorry I shot the ostler and kitchen maid, I own; but what am I to think of people who come into my room after I am in bed?

ALL SERVANTS.

Oh! the bloody minded old rogue!

MEADOWS.

I know the advantages which may be taken of my deafness, and am determined to secure myself.

WILLIAM.

56 THE DEAF LOVER.

WILLIAM.

I am determin'd to do the same, and so good
night. [runs off.]

2d SERVANT.

I'll stay no longer. [Exit.]

3d SERVANT.

Oh! if I am hindmost, may I be shot like the
poor ostler and kitchen maid! [Exit.]

MAID.

And may I be burnt if I stay to be shot!
[Exit.]

MEADOWS.

Oh, Fortune, auspicious to my warmest hopes!
—Now cou'd I but see, and converse one mo-
ment with my Sophia.—Ha! yonder comes a
light—'tis she—'tis she herself, my adorable
Sophia.

Enter Sophia.

SOPHIA.

I am come to tell you to lock yourself in im-
mediately—to-morrow I'll speak to you—it is
dangerous for us to continue a moment together.

MEADOWS.

But isn't to-morrow to be your wedding-day?
am I not to lose you for ever to-morrow?

SOPHIA.

SOPHIA.

No, Meadows, I am now satisfied of your honour and my guardian's villany; a plot has been just discovered to me, will astonish you—To-morrow I will quit this house, and put myself under your protection.

MEADOWS,

My love, my life! you transport me.

[Falls upon his knees and kisses her hand.]

Enter Young Wrongward.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

He shall leave the house to-night.—Ha! what do I see?

SOPHIA *aside*.

It's all over, and I may as well throw off the mask now as to-morrow.

Old Wrongward *roll'd in*.

OLD WRONGWARD.

He deserves a horse-pond instead of a good bed.

MEADOWS,

I shou'd prefer a good bed notwithstanding, Mr. Wrongward,

H

OLD

8 THE DEAF LOVER.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Why he has got his hearing.

MEADOWS.

Yes, Sir, and my feeling too, of resentment
or the base advantage you took of me and this
young lady.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Advantage! who the devil are you?

MEADOWS.

Can't you discover Meadows under this
disguise? that man whom you have so much
injured?

OLD WRONGWARD.

Meadows! this is cursed unlucky — but,
George, we must get him out of the house as fast
as possible.

CANTEEN *without.*

CANTEEN.

If you don't come by fair means, I'll lay you
by the heels, and force you into court.

Enter Canteen, John, and Betsey.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

All, I fear, is discover'd.

OLD

THE DEAF LOVER. 59

OLD WRONGWARD.

Eh! who is that fellow got hold of John?

CANTEEN.

Let his worship know, John; or I shall be committed for an assault, in the very act of thief-taking.

JOHN.

Why, Sir, if I must speak, it is you and my young master have brought me to this disgrace.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Who, I and my Son? why the fellow has lost his wits—or else he is drunk—take him to bed, I hate a drunkard.

JOHN.

Lies won't do now, I must speak truth, or suffer for it—Captain Meadows, I humbly ask your forgiveness, but ev'ry letter you sent to Miss Sophia, I stopt, by the positive orders of both my masters.

CANTEEN.

It's all very true, Sir, and amongst the rest, he stop'd the miniature you sent Miss Sophia, by which he was discovered—for the ugly dog had the impudence to attempt to pass it upon my Betsy, here, for his own proper likeness.

60 THE DEAF LOVER.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

Out of my sight, rascal—come Sophia, I am sorry you have been disturbed—Captain, you may have a bed, if you please.

MEADOWS.

No, Sir, I shall quit your house, and take my Sophia with me. *(Takes her by the hand.)*

OLD WRONGWARD.

What, would you steal a ward from her guardian?

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

Nay, if you proceed to force, make a prisoner of her—take the consequence. *(Draws.)*

MEADOWS.

She has been long a prisoner, Sir, in a place she dislikes; but here is my *habeas* for her removal. *(Pulls out a pistol.)* So, as you respect the law, gentlemen, stand by.

OLD WRONGWARD.

Roll me out of the way; I shall be shot, or run through, between them.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

What, have I no assistance? where are all my servants?

OLD

THE DEAF LOVER. 61

OLD WRONGWARD.

George, a word with you, George, this is a very ugly story, and we had better make the best of it.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

What, Sir, will you acquiesce in your dishonour?

MEADOWS.

Good night; you shall hear from me. (*Going.*)

OLD WRONGWARD.

Stay, Captain; I have something to propose to you.

YOUNG WRONGWARD.

I perceive what you intend, but I will not stay to be a witness of your weakness, and my own shame—I shall take other steps to right myself. (*Exit.*)

OLD WRONGWARD.

You see what an obstinate boy he is: but I won't cross your inclinations, Sophia; you have my consent.—This is always my way, when I can't help it. (*Aside.*)

MEADOWS.

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MEADOWS.

I take you at your word, Sir ; but to-morrow will put your ward under the protection of the law, for I will never take advantage of her partiality in my favour, until she is at full liberty to choose for herself.

True love a jealous delicacy knows,
And flights all dower, but what the heart bestows.

4 AP 54

F I N I S.

